

Tennessee Guard Deployments Reach 3,500

*By SFC Randy D. Harris
Director of Public Affairs
Tennessee National Guard*

Nashville, TN - Exceeding the numbers deployed during Desert Storm, the Tennessee National Guard currently has more than 3,500 officers, soldiers and airmen mobilized in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, or Iraqi Freedom. Guard members from throughout the state are upholding the Volunteer tradition in places as far away as Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Afghanistan, and as close to home as Fort Campbell, Fort Rucker and Fort Knox. Army Guard soldiers are providing security for National Guard Air Bases throughout the state, while others are maintaining the security of Fort Bragg, Fort Story, Fort Monroe, Fort Eustis and Fort Lee.

With the War in Iraq winding down, questions are raised as to the status of units that have mobilized and validated, but have not yet been shipped to their scheduled deployment site.

"Our folks are ready to go." Said Lt. Col. Bruce Griffith, commander of the 105th Personnel Services battalion, Nashville, currently at Ft. Rucker along with the 30th Finance Battalion from Smyrna. "We need a mission, these soldiers have worked too hard to go back home without accomplishing what we came to do."

The two battalions have been at Ft. Rucker since February 18th, and although morale is still extremely high, there is a feeling of "getting ready for the big game and not getting to play."

The speed in which the War with Iraq progressed has left several units ready with no place to go.

The 1-181 Field Artillery Battalion (MLRS) from Chattanooga is in a holding pattern at Ft. Campbell. Equipment has been shipped, but the critical MLRS mission of providing offensive or protective fires in a warzone is fast slipping away. The end of hostilities came too soon to get these Tennessee warriors into the fray.

While the speed in which the war progressed is a great tribute to the planning, soldiers and equipment of the United States and British Armed Forces, it may cause many Guard soldiers to feel less than a part of the Total Force.

The 776th Maintenance Company was instrumental in helping prepare the 101st Airborne Division for their deployment to Southwest Asia, and continue to provide maintenance support for troops still at Ft. Campbell.

Still, the Tennessee soldiers have proven time and time again that we can stand with the best of the best. Every unit deployed stood up with a higher "C" rating than required, and some Tennessee units were delayed while their parent or sister organization worked out the problems keeping those units from deploying.



Members of the 30th Finance Battalion check NBC equipment while at Ft. Rucker, AL.

Over the last few months, I've visited most of the units, either at home station prior to their deployment, or at their mobilization station during the validation process. In 35 years of service in the Tennessee Guard, I don't think I've ever seen morale higher, and more desire to "get on with it, get the job done, and get back home."

Whatever the ultimate outcome of this largest deployment in recent history, Tennesseans should be proud of their involvement, their commitment, and their professionalism.

The Volstate Guard

is an authorized unofficial publication of the Tennessee Army National Guard. Published quarterly, it is distributed free to units of the Tennessee Army National Guard and is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.tnmilitary.org>

Opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the editors and do not necessarily reflect official views of the Tennessee National Guard unless so indicated. Circulation 10,000 copies by email.

Gov. Phil Bredesen
Maj. Gen. Gus L. Hargett
Brig. Gen. Jimmy G. Welch
Randy D. Harris

*Commander In Chief
The Adjutant General
Asst. Adj. Gen., Army
Dir. Of Public Affairs*

Contributors

Randy D. Harris
Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski
Spec. Susan James
Spec. Bill Jones
Pfc. Matthew Zier
Pfc. Michael Cross
MSgt Bob Haskell

*Editor
133rd Public Affairs Det
133rd Public Affairs Det
133rd Public Affairs Det
133rd Public Affairs Det
133rd Public Affairs Det
National Guard Bureau*

Table of Contents

Proud Departure of the 155th by: Pfc. Matt Zier	Page 2
Coalition of Kennels Eases Deployment Worries by: Cpl. Susan James	Page 4
National Guard NASCAR 54 Debuts	Page 5
Recruiter working the field by: Spec. Bill Jones	Page 6
Pictures from Around	Page 7
ESGR Recognizes the Sacrifices of Employers by: Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski	Page 8
Aviation Soldiers Continue Their Mission by: Pfc. Mike Cross	Page 9

Proud Departure of the 155th Engineering Company

By: Pfc. Matt Zier
133rd MPAD

Heroes come in all shapes and sizes, but to the community of Waverly, Tenn., their heroes are the members of the 155th Engineering Company. On March 20, 2003 the Humphreys/Houston county based company departed for Ft. Campbell, KY for mobilization. Hours before the actual convoy started to move, the community prepared for their departure by hanging signs of encouragement and support all over Waverly. The city's support did not stop there.

It seemed as though the whole city came to watch the company's convoy. Some local businesses had shut down for the early morning hours just to watch, and those that could not shut down sent members of their crews to represent them. The local schools had cancelled classes for the morning, allowing the students and faculty to view the mobilization. Outside Waverly Central High School, the student body stood with their banners and

flags, cheering on the 155th. At one point during the makeshift parade, one could hear the WCHS choir singing "America, the Beautiful."

Making its way through the main thoroughfares of Waverly, the convoy passed the Waverly Elementary and Middle schools. As the convoy passed, the children screamed with pride, cheering on anyone wearing camouflage. Even the middle school's band had a tribute of their own to the troops, playing patriotic pieces. As the convoy passed through downtown Waverly, they were wished farewell through the salutes of previous war veterans.

Amongst all the cheers and chants directed toward the members of the 155th, one could see the sorrow in many faces. Both spectators and soldiers alike shed tears of sorrow. Although everyone knows this call cannot be ignored, they cannot help but feel sad for seeing their friends and loved-ones leave. Knowing that one day the 155th Engineering Company will be coming back home is what keeps this community going.

1-181 has seven father-son pairs

By Andy Drury
Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — When Rick Mullins last set foot in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm, his son Jeff was in the fourth grade. Now, as the 44-year-old member of the Tennessee Army National Guard's 1-181st Field Artillery Battalion prepares to go back, his now-grown son is going with him.

"It's helping us to get through because we're family," Staff Sgt. Mullins said.

Family ties run deep in the 1-181st. There are seven father-and-son pairs in the battalion, leaving Chattanooga next week for Fort Campbell, Ky. From there, Guard members expect to receive overseas orders for a possible war with Iraq, they said.

While not unheard of, seven fathers and their sons serving in the same battalion is uncommon, said Sgt. 1st Class Jamie Clark, who handles National Guard public affairs.

"It's not nearly as commonplace as serving with brothers or sisters," he said. "We've had some men stay on just to serve a couple of years with their sons. I think it's pretty cool those fathers do that."

Cody Mosier, a first sergeant with the 1-181st, said he was surprised to learn of so many fathers and sons in the Chattanooga battalion.

"It kind of shocked me," said 1st Sgt. Mosier, whose son Spc. Travis Mosier serves with him. "That's a little unusual."

Staff Sgt. Jasper Ellis, a U.S. Navy veteran from the early 1970s, said there never was any doubt his son, Staff Sgt. Mike Ellis, would follow him into military service.

"He's always loved it," the older Ellis said. "I knew from the time he was little that he'd be in the military."

But they never believed they would deploy together.

"It makes for a better unit," Staff Sgt. Mike Ellis said. "It's more cohesive and a better work environment."

Carolyn Ellis already has begun saying good-bye to her husband and stepson.

"Emotionally we've gone through several stages," she said. "Denial and then anger. But you learn to deal with it. I'm at the acceptance stage now and told God, 'If it's your will, bring them back.'"

A few days ago, Jasper and Carolyn Ellis updated his will.

"You have to deal with the fact there's a great possibility they won't return," she said. "There are no guarantees."

The men, though, said they are ready and willing to fight.

Maj. Paul Ballinger, 54, said having a family member deploy with him makes the experience personal.

"All of a sudden I've got somebody else to think about," said Ballinger, who serves with his 25-year-old son, Pfc. Ryan Ballinger. "It makes it a little more real. But knowing how well our boys are trained makes it a lot easier."

Spc. Travis Mosier said having his father in the unit doesn't earn him special favors.

"He expects a lot out of me," he said. "But he's still there as a father to teach me things to make me a better soldier."

First Sgt. Cody Mosier said he's concerned for his son's safety.

"I know we've got a job to do, but the father-son tie is still there," he said.

Two of the younger men said they changed their plans to stand with their fathers in a possible war.

Spc. Jeb Kittle left a job with the U.S. Army to serve



in the Guard with his dad, Sgt. James Kittle. And Spc. Jeff Ware postponed his education to join his father, Staff Sgt. Roy Ware, if duty called.

"I put a hold on college to play war with my dad," Spc. Ware said. "He went to Desert Storm, but I wasn't going to let him go back over there by himself this time."

The group of men said their emotions are bittersweet — an eagerness to serve mixed with sadness for family members they'll leave behind next week.

"That boy of mine wouldn't have it any other way," said Sgt. 1st Class Jimmer Bolden of his son, Spc. Corey Bolden. "And I wouldn't be a father if I didn't worry about him."

Coalition of Kennels Eases Deployment Worries

By: Cpl. Susan James
133rd MPAD

The order finally came. You have thought of everything, bills, car insurance, storage, the lease, everything. Then you look down. Your cute, hairy friend has his ball and is ready to play. What do you do with him? Your family and friends are unable to watch him for an entire year. You can walk him over to the pound or human society, but there is no guarantee he won't get the shot that gives him eternal rest. You can't do that to your best friend!

Unfortunately, this is a problem facing many National Guard and reserve soldiers with the possibility of deployment so close to home. There was nowhere to turn with their pets, until now.

Randy Boyer, the owner of Country Lane Pet Resort in Cincinnati, Ohio, has a solution. He has gathered an alliance of pet kennels from the tri-state area to help these citizen-soldiers. This coalition's goal is to give military personnel a safe haven for their pet while they are serving their country. This Military Pet Relief is the first organized effort across the country to unite kennel and pet resort owners with shelters to save military pet's lives.

"I never thought about the magnitude of what reservist go through when they deploy," said Boyer. There is so much for them to think about, in so little time, that the pet is often last on the list.

This coalition of small business owners has stepped up to the plate, said Boyer. They are concerned, just like the soldiers, that these pets are taken care of and not sent to shelters. Animal shelters nationwide are already overflowing with unwanted animals; we don't need to add a reservist's best friend to that list.

Pet resorts and boarding kennels willing to help serve their country are donating runs to soldiers, free of charge. The pets will be given quality care while the soldier is away; and they'll be waiting, tails wagging, when they return.

Sundance Kennels in Independence, Kentucky, is one of the many boarding kennels working closely with Boyer. Deanna Scott, the owner, holds this movement close to her heart. She has friends in the military that are currently facing the possibility of deployment.



Sundance Kennels is one of the regions kennels helping ease the burden of pet care for soldiers that may deploy

"I understand the love they have for their pets and can imagine how much they will miss them," said Scott.

Another team looking out for the soldier is NetPets, Inc., a non-profit organization located in South Carolina. The Military Pets Foster Project's purpose is to connect military pets with foster families, at no expense to the reservist. They currently have over 5,000 families willing to take in a military pet until the soldier returns.

Deploying soldiers interested in gathering more information about the Military Pet Relief effort may contact Randy Boyer at (513) 553-4513 or visit his website at www.countrylanepetresort.com. Pet resorts and boarding kennels interested in joining this coalition may also contact Boyer at the number above.

Soldiers interested in finding a foster family for their pet or families willing to become foster homes may contact NetPets, Inc. at www.netpets.org.

National Guard NASCAR 54 Debuts

ARLINGTON, Va., Feb. 13, 2003 — Millions of fans have screamed themselves hoarse while watching stock cars, gleaming with familiar names and numbers, compete in Winston Cup races nationwide. Now a new contender seeks their approval.

Crowds got their first look at a brand new red, white and blue Ford emblazoned National Guard 54 when NASCAR's premier racing circuit roared to life Feb. 8 for the 2003 season at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Twenty-year racing veteran Todd Bodine, 38, drove the new car that is bearing this country's colors and the National Guard name for a new team, BelCar Racing, and for the new season of major league racing that will officially begin with the Daytona 500 on Feb. 16.



The National Guard is the primary advertiser. The car's number, 54, represents the 50 states and four territories where Army and Air Guard units are located.

"This is a great opportunity. I feel like I'm driving for the whole country," said the younger brother of Winston Cup star Geoff Bodine before racing in the 70-lap Budweiser Shootout. This race is for drivers who started last year's Winston Cup races in the pole position, the No. 1 spot.

"Guard men and women are serving all over the world," said Bodine. "The car is red, white and blue. It's like I'm driving the American flag."

The team has also attached decals in the shape of the STS-107 space shuttle mission patch in honor the seven Columbia astronauts who perished February 1.

Bodine started eighth among 19 cars and was 13th in the pack of 18 that finished the race. The field included Dale Earnhardt Jr., who started last and finished first; defending Winston Cup champion Tony Stewart, who finished 15th; and Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson.

The directors of the Army and Air National Guard were among the 75,000 fans who flocked to the 25th annual Shootout, which was run under the lights and on prime-time television for the first time.

"NASCAR is a team sport and a family event. That's why it's exciting to be a part of it," said Lt. Gen. Roger Schultz, Army Guard director, who built and drove his own stock car for a couple of seasons when he was a young man in Iowa. "It's a way to reach the American people and tell the Guard's story. And NASCAR fans are very patriotic, very patriotic."

"So many Americans are watching these cars, and they will see that red, white and blue car," said Lt. Gen. Daniel James III, Air Guard director, while taking in his first stock car race. "Once again, the National Guard is connecting with the communities."

That means connecting with the whole community, including African- and Hispanic-American Journal."

That's what BelCar majority owner Sam Belnavis hopes to accomplish. His team is trying to bring diversity into the world of auto racing by developing drivers and crew members from minorities, including African and Hispanic Americans.

Belnavis is a marketing and advertising executive who introduced the Miller Brewing Co. to NASCAR racing in 1981 when he was director of sports marketing. He signed Bobby Allison to pilot the No. 22 Miller High Life Buick. His partner is 32-year NASCAR vet-



Continued on page 6

"NASCAR" Continued from page 5

eran Travis Carter, a former crew chief for Winston Cup champions Benny Parsons and Cale Yarborough.

"We're trying to change the face of racing. That's the challenge before us," said Cherise Belnavis-Johnson, Sam's daughter and the team's director of sponsor relations. "Travis brings the racing experience to the team that we need. My father brings the marketing experience that Travis needs."

BelCar has started its Motorsport Diversity Development Program to develop minority drivers in the Hooters Pro Cup Series as well as to bring racial diversity to the pit crew.



National Guard 54 joins the race

"We want to open up all parts of racing to minorities, not just the drivers," Belnavis-Johnson said.

That is important to National Guard leaders, who are also striving to attain more diversity in the Army and Air Guard ranks. The National Guard declared 2002 as its Year of Diversity, and Army Guard director Schultz insists the cause still lives.

"Diversity is not about a year. It's about a journey," he said.

And that journey, like National Guard 54's NASCAR career, has only just begun.

(Master Sgt. Bob Haskell is senior correspondent in the National Guard Bureau Public Affairs Office, Arlington, Va.)

National Guard

54

Recruiter working the field

*By: Spec. Bill Jones
133rd MPAD*

A possible war with Iraq has not slowed recruiting. Young men and women still desire to serve their country by doing something positive for their community. Staff Sgt. Brian Stacy, a Franklin area recruiter, continues to meet his mission.

Stacy said that the winter doldrums has its effect on people's spirits as well as recruiting, but what's good for cabin fever is also good for meeting new soldiers. "How I am able to meet my mission each month? By being very visible in the schools and visible where potential recruits hang out. Rarely do they ever come to me."



Staff Sgt. Brian Stacy stays active with possible new recruits. Photo by: Spec. Bill Jones

Another way that Stacy remains visible is by teaching. "I frequently drop in at the Jr. ROTC class at the high school in my area. The instructor, a retired Army major, will ask me to either comment on or teach a subject."

Stacy says that the majority of his recruits are high school seniors or recent graduates. Occasionally, someone with a G.E.D. and rarely by someone in college will approach him. Although college benefits and job training is high on the list of reasons to enlist, the common motivation of new recruits is their patriotic duty.

When asked what influenced him to enlist, Stacy, a 1987 graduate of Page High School in Franklin, Tenn., says it was probably the movie "Top Gun".

Military service has become a family tradition for Staff Sgt. Stacy. His younger brother is in A.I.T. at linguist school. "He likes it!"

Staff Sgt. Stacy has been in the military for 16 years and resides in Manchester with his wife Alison and son Byron.

Pictures from around...



Spec. Dennis Turner of T Troop 4-278th ACR conducts final inspection before mounting a Hellfire training round. Photo by: Sgt. Walter VanOchten



Smyrna, Tenn. Pfc. Joshua Davis and Spec. Amanda Collins from 4-278th ACR work in the forward transmission compartment of the OH-58 Kiowa Warrior. Photo by: Pfc. Matt Zier



ESGR Recognizes the Sacrifices of Employers

By: Sgt. Mark M. Wojciechowski
133rd MPAD



Capt. Randal D. Cobel (left) presents Kerri Wilhote with an employer certificate of appreciation for her support of Spec. Battle (center) and his Army National Guard Duties. Photo by Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski

Murfreesboro, Tenn. Too many employers go unrecognized when it comes to their support and contributions to the men and women of the Armed Forces.

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve or ESGR is an organization that recognizes employers for their support and understanding of the needs of our troops.

Sometimes the absence of an employee for military duty causes hardships for these employers. It often goes unrecognized that the employers support for their soldier employee is essential in maintaining the force of our reserve and guard troops.

The ESGR awards businesses and companies certificates of recognition for the support of their soldier employees.

The reserve and guard forces understand that employers have missions to accomplish. Their ability to

adapt and accommodate the calling of military duty is greatly appreciated by our nation.

Specialist Anthony Battle of the 173rd Personnel Services Detachment has put in a recommendation for this award for his employer, Mrs. Kerri Wilhote of the Alvin C. York Veterans Medical Center. The award recognizes the understanding and ability to employ members of the armed forces reserves.

Spec. Battle works full time for the Veterans Medical Center in Murfreesboro, Tenn. Occasionally; a little extra time is needed to prepare for deployments and weekend duties. With this said, Mrs. Wilhote has been more than understanding when it comes to accommodating Spec. Battle's military obligations.



Aviation Soldiers Continue Their Mission Despite Ever Changing Conditions

By Pfc. Mike Cross
133rd MPAD

Smyrna, Tenn. Aviation soldiers in one Tennessee Army National Guard unit have an exciting and challenging mission tasked to them involving many changes.

Since its formation in October 1997, soldiers of "A" Troop, 107th Aviation have built an entirely new unit, maintained their high mission standards and, finally, have seen the transition from one type of aircraft to another.

One change the unit is currently going through is exchanging the AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter for the new AH-64 Apache attack helicopter.

Staff Sgt. Byron Loveless, who has been with the unit since its formation in 1997, has seen such changes before. Loveless, the First Hanger Technical Inspector, is a full-time technician for the 107th. He inspects the aircraft after they have been repaired.

"We were turning Cobra's in at Ft. Drum, NY within a month of 9/11. All flights around New York City were stopped at that time and we had actually loaded up and were ready to leave from here (Smyrna) to fly to New York, but were stopped four mornings in a row before we received clearance," Loveless said.

Another recent obstacle for the unit occurred when soldiers from the 107th went to inspect and receive AH-64 Apache helicopters, they were sent home empty handed.

According to Loveless, a Utah National Guard unit who had been activated in support of the crisis in the Middle East received these aircraft.

AH-64's finally began arriving just this month.

The transition from one type of aircraft for another not only involves the change of aircraft but also the training to work on that specific type of aircraft.

Loveless said, the military "has come up with a good program, they have 'Transition Courses' for soldiers who have moved from older aircraft to newer. The soldiers who for years have maintained the Cobra now will have to work on an Apache, therefore they will have to be trained on the new aircraft."

The aviation maintenance school lasts for five months and includes information about basic aviation maintenance universal to all aircraft.

Instead of spending time and money on a new full course, soldiers who have previously completed the school can go through the Transition Course. These can

last as little as four weeks and only focuses on the specifics of the newer aircraft.

"These courses save us a lot of time and money," Loveless explained.

Due to the shortened time of the school, soldiers do not have to be away from their families or unit for a long period of time. Transition Courses are held at the Western Area Training Sight in Arizona, located between Phoenix and Tucson.

When asked about future changes Loveless said, "A new aircraft, the RAH-66 Comanche is in the research and development phase. I have heard that two or three of these are already flying. This is an attack helicopter designed to take the place of the OH-58 D, Kiowa Warrior helicopter and the Apache."

The unit, led by 1st Lt. Dwayne Vick and Sgt. 1st Class David Lavigne is made up of just over eighty soldiers. Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) include: Utility Helicopter Repairer, Observation/Scout Helicopter Repairer, Aircraft/Armament/Missile Repairer and many other specialties related to maintenance of Army National Guard helicopters. Other MOS's, such as supply, needed for the day to day operations of a well functioning unit are included too.

"Our mission," said Lavigne, "Is basically second level maintenance. If an aircraft has a bad transmission, we go in and repair it. Some other parts, we don't replace at our level, we repair them."

The 107th is a Non Division Core Level Intermediate Maintenance Company, or one step above unit level maintenance.

Their mission is if an aircraft goes down, the soldiers of this unit will recover the aircraft, send it to an area of operations in the rear, repair the aircraft and send it back to its unit.

"I enjoy working in the unit", Lavigne said. "These guys set an example for others to emulate, especially in teamwork and motivation."

Lavigne goes on to say that the many transitions the unit has gone through has occasionally caused a small drop in morale. Soldiers were able to overcome the obstacles and bring morale back up, while still maintaining a strong sense of comrade that is important to the units success. The 107th works with the UH60 Blackhawk, OH58 A and OH58 D Kiowa Warrior, AH1 Cobra and AH64 Apache.